2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

the society as unfit for interaction. If the population of the undivided Badaga community in 1871 was just under twenty thousand, then there has scarcely been any growth *in scale* when we consider that today this would still be about the order of people with whom a Badaga could potentially interact *within* one of the several factions which divide the current community of over a hundred thousand (cf. Appendix 2, p. 249).

Health Improvements and Economic Growth

The hazards of famine and epidemic disease which confronted Badagas in the nineteenth century have posed less of a problem in the twentieth. The young generation has never known starvation. Standards of health have much improved and public health facilities, especially mass inoculations, have decimated the earlier scourges. Even the modern practice of piping water into the villages has caused a vast improvement in health (Grigg, 1880, 185, n. 2; Hockings, 1979b, 10–15).

The development of a mixed cash-crop farming economy and slight industrialization from the time of the First World War have been crucial factors in the improvement of Badaga living conditions. While there are still many families that are landless or very poor, the opportunities for earning cash are so much wider than they were a century ago that general famine is not a severe or recurrent threat any more.

Education, too, has broadened the Badagas' view of society and is now very popular with them. As early as 1887 it was noted that they had themselves built six schools out of village funds.[20]

The community thus managed to overcome the social and economic difficulties which, if not ameliorated, have often triggered some kind of revitalization movement.[21] There was no successful revitalization among the Badagas even though several small and localized cults showed some potential. Instead the people were able to survive their period of frustration, accept the existence of a separate Christian community and shift from subsistence to a cash-crop economy that allowed them to improve their standard of living significantly even though the ratio of people to farm-land was rapidly increasing. Thus we can say that while the society is in no sense static today it has managed to

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AM50 Badaga AM50

177 By now the Badaga Christians were viewed as a separate caste,
178 and the old antagonism over Christian conversion had given place
796 to a new realism which accepted the British, tolerated their religion and sought to collaborate with them in the realms of commerce and administration. The periodic massacres of Kurumbas had also come to an end.

178 Land fragmentation and indebtedness continued to be problems
241 for the twentieth-century farmer, but new techniques of commer-
242 cial cultivation raised the per capita income appreciably. Chemical fertilizers and insecticides were now used, along with good seed and reputable tea cuttings. Money-lenders, middlemen and truckers all appeared on the scene to answer local needs. Most of the hillsides were terraced to permit efficient farming, and the emergence of co-operative societies from 1911 helped with this as well as with the more general problem of rural credit.

177 These new directions in the farm economy were fully in evidence
178 by 1930, at which time most Badagas broke off their time-honoured exchange relationship with the Kotas, Todas and Kurumbas and began to seek the artifacts these tribesmen had made in town markets instead. The ostensible reasons for this break are several. Badagas usually mention the increasing cost of having a Kota band at their ceremonies; while Kotas mention an insulting article in a national newspaper of 1928, 'The Hindu', which implied that Kotas were descended from the unions of Todas with Badagas.[3] A glance at the population graph in Appendix 2, however, will make it clear that the over-riding reason for the break must have been the disproportionately large number [161] of Badagas. By 1931 there were 42,500 of them, too many to be adequately supplied in the customary way by a few hundred Todas and Kotas.

178 The Second World War brought a further surge in the demand
241 for potatoes to feed the European troops stationed throughout
433 south and southeast Asia; at the same time government financing helped the growers, with the result that this new capital and the high prices potatoes were fetching greatly alleviated the former indebtedness of Badagas. After 1957 potato production fell sharply with a series of disease-ridden crops, and tea, first planted by Badagas some thirty years before, now became a popular cash-crop too. By 1970 cabbage had also become an important crop.

• 511 Modern Badagas enjoy a high standard of living, occupy comfortable tiled houses, send their sons to college, make frequent

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

trips to various South Indian cities, see numerous films and delight in mechanical devices. The minority who now live in the Nilgiri towns, among them numerous Christians, have taken on a variety of new urban jobs and are found in most of the professions. Few were involved in the Independence movement, fewer are under the influence of Gandhi's philosophy and fewer still understand or care for Marxism. The Communist vote is negligible, and the idea of revolutionary communism unappealing. For Badagas change means securing profit in a capitalist economy, adopting a westernized style of individualism and thus shifting away from ascribed status towards that which is achieved.

This transformation has come about while physical communications have been improving steadily. All the more populous villages are linked with the towns by regular bus services. Since the beginning of the century there has been a railway to the plains. Many of the middlemen who sell fertilizer or buy potatoes have their own trucks; some large-scale tea planters have cars or jeeps. Radios are widely accessible now that the villages are electrified; yet radio is mainly a channel for light music and is not as important as the 'social' films in introducing new, primarily urban, values and wants to the Badagas. Newspapers have a broad circulation in the villages and are much more effective than radios in transmitting news. Today, therefore, every Badaga village has easy access to information about the world beyond the Nilgiris, through seeing films, reading the papers or talking with friends and relatives who work in the towns.

SOME CONCLUSIONS ON MODERNIZATION

There is a multi-causal type of linkage in socio-cultural changes like those documented in this study: one single factor does not by itself cause a new situation, but several discernible factors combine to cause variant patterns of a new situation. We may state this process in another way. When a community moves from subsistence cultivation to rational participation (i.e., maximization of gains) in a cash economy, certain changes come about in the culture and the social organization. These are conditioned by a combination of local ecological factors, outside governmental activity, the availability of certain goods, services and entrepreneurial personnel, adequate flow of information, and the play of

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AM50 Badaga AM50

121 chance events or 'historical accidents'. Because the combination of all these conditions will vary from one region to another, the manner of the economic transition will also vary. We should therefore not expect a replication of the successive phases of the Badagas' development elsewhere in India, even though such people as the Coorgs may suggest a superficial parallel (see Muthanna, 1953, *passim*; Srinivas, 1965, *passim*).

121 178 The Badagas' transition to a cash economy depended in part on very favourable ecological conditions. Their land and the climate were well suited to the new crops, and for some decades it was even possible to extend the area of cultivation. A protectionist government fixed grain prices, provided roads and encouraged railway construction and even supplied Badagas with technical information and improved seeds. No external pressure was placed upon them to make the transition; yet some of the more affluent farmers living near towns took the chance with initial crops of marketable vegetables or grain to sell to the two breweries. Their decision found some reward and incentive in the profits from the local market; and with the advent of the railway and the First World War this expanded dramatically. Once some success in the market had brought these profits into the community, reinvestment and spending took a variety of forms. The Badaga economy became increasingly differentiated, there was considerable variation in wealth from one family to another, a class structure based on affluence began to emerge and most families sought to maximize their gains, even at the expense of their customary relations with the neighbouring tribes.

121 Though the details of their history are unique, there are some regularities that tie the Badaga case in with others; in particular, the modern stress on education, the desire for non-essential consumer goods, reinvestment of profits in land (Epstein, 1962, 326–328), the role of mass media in popularizing urban tastes (Rao, 1966), the replacement of traditional co-operative associations by market relations and co-operative societies, and the periodic restructuring of society through factional disputes.

NOTES

175 1. A survey was actually made in 1820; see above, p. 166, n. 2, and Hockings 1973, 869.

161 178 511 2. So also the Sanitary Commissioner, Dr. Cornish: 'I have no doubt the native

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AM50 Badaga AM50

population is increasing, and that the position of the Badaga has materially improved. I notice especially the facts that they are now tiling their houses, that their women and children earn money on the tea and coffee estates, and that they buy rāgi and grain from the low country, and get a better market for their straw and cattle. They wear jewels of gold and silver, saved from their earnings'; quoted by Grigg, 1880, 34. This contrasts with the situation at the start of the British occupation of the hills, when the Badagas were so few in proportion to the land available that there was no need for crop rotation, as fields could be left fallow for years at a time; Mackworth, 1823, 124–126.

3. Emeneau, 1946, 265. Ranga, 1934, 4, reports that around 1930, 'In addition to this heavy expenditure upon funerals, more than three hundred Badagas cease work for more than two days and live at the expense of the relatives of the deceased or the people of the village. The expenses of a funeral incurred by all the Badagas in a hamlet come to more than Rs 600. To add to this, their European employers lose their confidence in the ability of these people for regular service, since they cease work without giving any notice whatever . . .'; similarly Metz, 1864, 89–90.

[p. 246 is blank]

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

of a sociologist, is that—unlike most communities on the subcontinent—the Badagas can be categorized neither as tribe nor as caste. To be precise, they are refugees drawn from several castes in southern Mysore centuries ago, who then consolidated themselves into a community on the Nilgiri Massif and to some extent may have then emulated the social organization of the neighbouring Toda tribe (Hockings 1979a).

The very name *Badaga* means "northerner" in their language, and was clearly applied to them only after they had fled from the plains immediately to the north of the Nilgiris. The reason for this flight is made quite clear in their legends: in A.D. 1565 the Vijayanagar Empire was destroyed by Muslims invading from the north. The ancestral Badagas, fearing for the safety of their womenfolk, fled to the Nilgiris and adopted a tribal type of dress for both sexes. In 1603 a certain Father Finicio, the first European visitor, encountered them on this plateau. He described them (in Portuguese) as as Badegas, and gave the impression that they then numbered 500 to 1,000 people and inhabited no more than three villages (Finicio 1603). Already they had quite a varied mixed-farming economy. The most remarkable accomplishment of the Badagas has been the consummate success with which the community has adapted to and multiplied in surroundings that were initially wild and strange for them, and which lay at an elevation 3,000 to 5,000 feet higher than did their ancestral villages on the Mysore Plain. Their agricultural success has been partly due to their adoption of foreign techniques. Typically European crops are commonly grown today on terraces made with the help of machines. The fields are nourished with artificial fertilizers and the harvest is transported in lorries. These improved techniques have led to a better standard of living and a tendency for fathers to provide their sons with the education that they missed themselves. In the four main towns of the Massif there is now a sizeable Badaga middle class, and many of the men are doctors, lawyers, teachers, or government officials. Although still largely a rural people, speaking a distinct but unwritten Dravidian language, Badagas now have an unusually high rate of literacy in both Tamil and English.

Previous Studies

1.3. It is possible to show in considerable detail how the Badaga